

Message Text

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S E C R E T STATE 148813

NODIS
FOR BRZEZINSKI ONLY

FOLLOWING REPEAT BONN 10621 ACTION SECSTATE JUN 27.
QUOTE S E C R E T BONN 10621

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FOR THE SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (SCHMIDT, HELMUT) SOPN, OGEN, PFOR, GW
SUBJECT: SCHMIDT'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON: HIS CONCERN
ABOUT RFE/RL

REFS: (A) BONN 10177; (B) BONN 10477

1. DURING THE CONVERSATION IN WHICH HE GAVE THE
POLITICAL COUNSELOR A LIST OF TOPICS THAT SCHMIDT MIGHT
WISH TO DISCUSS IN WASHINGTON (REF B), CHANCELLERY AIDE
RUHFUS ALSO PROVIDED SOME FURTHER BACKGROUND ABOUT THE
CHANCELLOR'S ATTITUDE ON RFE/RL.

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2. RUHFUS, IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION, SAID HE HAD NOT
YET HEARD OF THE CHANCELLOR'S REMARKS TO THE AMBASSADOR
ON THIS SUBJECT LAST WEEK (REF A). HE THOUGHT THEY WERE
PROBABLY MOTIVATED BY THE CHANCELLOR'S DISAPPOINTMENT
AT NOT HAVING BEEN CONSULTED ABOUT THE RECENT REQUEST
TO CONGRESS FOR AUTHORITY TO BOOST THE RFE/RL TRANS-
MITTER CAPACITY.

3. RUHFUS SAID THE CHANCELLOR THOUGHT HE HAD HAD AN UNDERSTANDING WITH FORMER SECRETARY KISSINGER THAT THE RADIOS WOULD GRADUALLY BE REDUCED IN FUNCTION AND PRESENCE, AND THAT SCHMIDT WAS THUS DOUBLY SURPRISED AT OUR ACTION.

4. RUHFUS SAID HE WAS NOT SURE WHAT THE CHANCELLOR'S OFFICIAL POSITION ON THIS SUBJECT WOULD BE DURING HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH THE PRESIDENT BECAUSE THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE DISAGREEMENT WITHIN THE COALITION ABOUT WHAT SHOULD BE DONE REGARDING THE RADIOS. HE SAID IT WAS UNCERTAIN THAT SCHMIDT WOULD WANT TO RISK THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL TURMOIL THAT COULD FOLLOW IF THE RADIOS WERE TO BE REMOVED OR THEIR ACTIVITY REDUCED AT HIS REQUEST.

5. COMMENT: RUHFUS' OBSERVATIONS ECHO THE REMARKS MADE BY THE CHANCELLOR BUT ALSO POINT TO THE CHANCELLOR'S DILEMMA: THE RADIOS ARE AN IRRITANT IN FRG RELATIONS WITH THE USSR AND EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AND THE - CHANCELLOR PRESUMABLY WILL AGAIN BE COMPELLED TO DEFEND THEM DURING HIS UPCOMING MEETING WITH BREZHNEV. HENCE HIS POSSIBLE RESENTMENT AT THE LACK OF CONSULTATION. ON THE OTHER HAND, WE DOUBT THAT HIS FDP COALITION PARTNER WOULD SUPPORT AN OFFICIAL DEMAND THAT THE US REDUCE THE SECRET

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ACTIVITIES OF THE RADIOS. THEREFORE, SCHMIDT MAY LIMIT HIMSELF TO A PLEA FOR FUTURE CONSULTATION. NONETHELESS, WE SHOULD KEEP IN MIND THAT THIS IS AN AREA IN WHICH IT IS EASY TO GENERATE MISUNDERSTANDING BETWEEN OURSELVES AND THE FRG, AND THAT WE SHOULD, THEREFORE, PROCEED ON THE BASIS OF FULL COORDINATION. IT WOULD BE VERY HELPFUL IF THE PRESIDENT WERE ABLE TO GIVE SCHMIDT ASSURANCES ALONG THESE LINES.

STOESSEL UNQUOTE VANCE

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